PLEDGE OF ALLEGIANCE

The Honorable RICHARD BURR led the Pledge of Allegiance, as follows:

I pledge allegiance to the Flag of the United States of America, and to the Republic for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.

APPOINTMENT OF ACTING PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE

The PRESIDING OFFICER. The clerk will read a communication to the Senate from the President pro tempore (Mr. STEVENS).

The assistant legislative clerk read the following letter:

U.S. SENATE,
PRESIDENT PRO TEMPORE,
Washington, DC, December 5, 2006.

To the Senate:

Under the provisions of rule I, paragraph 3, of the Standing Rules of the Senate, I hereby appoint the Honorable RICHARD BURR, a Senator from the State of North Carolina, to perform the duties of the Chair.

TED STEVENS,
President pro tempore.

Mr. BURR thereupon assumed the Chair as Acting President pro tempore.

RESERVATION OF LEADER TIME

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. Under the previous order, the leadership time is reserved.

RECOGNITION OF THE MAJORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The majority leader is recognized.

SCHEDULE

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, I hope everyone has had a good Thanksgiving recess—enjoyable, relaxing. We have a busy few days ahead of us as we have our final week for the 109th Congress, and there are a number of priorities we need to address.

We have the Gates nomination. The hearing on that nomination began this morning. It is our intent to have the Senate address and complete action on this nomination no later than this Friday.

We have a continuing resolution. I was just talking to the Democratic leader about that. The continuing resolution does expire at midnight on Friday. Absent action on any other appropriations, this continuing resolution will extend funding for Government operations into 2007, and it will not contain earmarks or policy initiatives.

Also on the agenda are various tax, trade, and health extenders. Bipartisan Senate work has been spearheaded by Senator GRASSLEY and Senator BAUCUS. They assembled a package of necessary tax, trade, and health policy extensions. That is being filed as we speak.

Fourth, yesterday Senate conferees were named to the United States-India civil nuclear cooperation deal. The burden now falls on the Senate and House conferees to conclude final work on this very important piece of legislation. It would implement a nuclear power technology sharing agreement with the United States and India. This morning I talked with Prime Minister Singh of India, who underscored the importance of this legislation.

Fifth, the Senate is also close to action on the bioterrorism bill, a bill we had worked on in a bipartisan way. This legislation will make improvements and enhancements in our ability to anticipate and react to bioterrorism attacks—again a bipartisan priority. I very much hope we will be able to finish that this week as well.

Sixth, we have the Vietnam trade agreement. If the House can act on the Vietnam trade agreement, the Senate will act on that measure.

There are a whole range of other legislative initiatives that the Senate will consider as they do become available. These will include necessary programmatic extensions as well as any cleared nominations, so we have a packed agenda.

Specifically for today, this afternoon we will begin with the time until 2 p.m. set aside for Senator DEWINE. I will have a brief statement. The Democratic leader will have a brief statement after my opening remarks and announcements this morning. Shortly after 2 o'clock today we will proceed to the consideration of the Agriculture appropriations bill. Following the statements from the bill's managers, Senator CONRAD will be recognized to offer his amendment on agricultural disaster. It is expected a point of order will be raised to the Conrad amendment, and a vote on the motion to waive will occur around 5 o'clock this afternoon. That will be the first rollcall vote this week. We have a number of items to address over the course of the week, which I have outlined.

Mr. President, I do want to make a very brief statement.

JUDICIAL NOMINATIONS

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, there is a very common question I been asked over the last several days: During your 4-year tenure as majority leader, what has been the most constitutionally challenging issue confronting the Senate?

I didn't have to think very long. I very quickly came to this whole topic of judicial filibusters, which unfortunately reflected one of the most difficult and challenging aspects of this institution over the last 4 years; that is, the partisanship that would come to the surface and the obstruction that resulted from that partisanship. It was this unprecedented use of these filibusters, judicial filibusters, in the last two Congresses that came very close to fundamentally disrupting the Senate's relationship with the executive branch and the Senate's relationship with the judicial branch. It impaired the Senate's ability to discharge a very basic constitutional obligation—to advise and consent.

In the process, Senate traditions were damaged. I believe they have been resolved. I am very hopeful that this partisanship will not resurface in future Congresses. In those 214 years between 1789 and 2003, exactly one judicial nominee was stopped by filibuster, and over that period of 214 years that single case was a lonely historical aberration. Until this Congress and the Congress right before that, the previous Congress, which was my first as leader, we had this Senate tradition literally shattered and we saw in that one Congress, and it continued into this Congress; after 214 years of one blocked nominee by filibuster, there were 10 in that very short period of time. So for decades we have had two great Senate traditions that existed side by side: For one, a general respect for the filibuster itself, and the other, a consensus that judicial nominations brought to the floor would receive an up-or-down vote.

Filibusters, of course, are periodically conducted on legislative matters. Sometimes successfully and sometimes they are ended by cloture. However, filibusters on judicial nominees have not impeded this basic constitutional responsibility of our Senate's advice and consent, that important role in judicial nominations. In the exceedingly rare cases in the past where filibusters were attempted on these nominations, very quickly cloture was always invoked with bipartisan support, support from both sides, and the filibusters ceased.

But in the last Congress, the previous Congress, these judicial filibusters became an instrument of partisan politics. As I said, I hope that such partisan politics can be set aside in the future.

Due to these filibusters—again, a whole series of them in the last Congress and this Congress—the Senate traditions were set aside. They were set aside but then also they collided before they were set aside. If matters were left to their own purpose, either the power to give advice and consent would yield to the filibuster or the filibuster would ultimately have to yield to advise and consent. So in response to these tradition-shattering filibusters, we sought to create a precedent. The precedent came to be known as the constitutional option, and that would guarantee a very simple principle, one which had been respected over time by tradition here. And that is after substantial debate each judicial nominee brought to the floor would get an up-or-down vote.

Proceeding with the constitutional option was painful to many Senators, including myself, because of that respect for minority rights. But even

these longstanding rights can take on new forms from time to time and become abused. That is exactly what happened in the last Congress. We could not permit the filibuster, the judicial filibuster, to take root, to become the new precedent in this Congress and therefore, to restore constitutional precedent, the constitutional option—putting it forth on the floor, bringing it to the floor—became a necessary last resort.

It was fascinating because once we stood on principle and moved toward that constitutional option, literally the night before we carried it out, a compromise was reached and important Senate traditions were restored. Senate traditions all of a sudden came back to what they had always been up until two Congresses ago, and that is the filibusters would be confined to ''extraordinary circumstances.'' That is an exercise of self-restraint, something, again, I encourage this new Congress to adhere to in the future.

So after that, Democrats who would be voting against these nominees by continuing these filibusters did switch and did allow these nominees to, for the most part, pass.

If we had not put that constitutional option on the table, great nominees never would have been confirmed. But for the constitutional option, judicial filibusters would have become an ever more routine part of business on the floor and, but for the constructional option, deal brokers would have had no deal to broker.

Because we acted, the sword of the judicial filibuster was sheathed. Highly qualified nominees who would have been blocked now sit on courts of appeals. Sam Alito, who was, in fact, himself subject of a failed filibuster, now serves on the U.S. Supreme Court. The problem of judicial filibusters was of monumental importance. It affected the internal functioning of the Senate, that relationship between the Senate and the Presidency and the relationship between the Senate and the courts. It was the biggest challenge that I confronted as majority leader and was the issue of largest consequence for our constitutional system.

Mr. President, to reiterate, during my tenure as majority leader, the most vexatious and constitutionally challenging issue confronting the Senate was judicial filibusters. This tactic threatened to disrupt fundamentally the Senate's relationship with coordinate branches of Government and to impair the Senate's ability to discharge its constitutional obligation to advise and consent. In the process, Senate traditions were damaged.

In the 214 years between 1789 and 2003, exactly one judicial nominee was stopped by filibuster. That case occurred in 1968, when President Lyndon Johnson nominated Abe Fortas to be Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court. The filibuster that erupted was broadly bipartisan, mainly on ethics grounds, but many commentators worried about the constitutional implications the filibuster presented. Chief among them was the Senate majority leader, Mike Mansfield. In Senate debate on September 25, 1968, he put this issue squarely:

> I reiterate we have a constitutional obligation to consent or not to consent to this nomination. We may evade that obligation, but we cannot deny it. As for any post, the question which must be faced is simply: Is the man qualified for the appointed position? That is the only question. It cannot be hedged, hemmed, or hawed. There is one question: Shall we consent to this Presidential appointment? A Senator or group of Senators may frustrate the Senate indefinitely in the exercise of its constitutional obligation with respect to this question. In so doing, they presume great personal privilege at the expense of the responsibilities of the Senate as a whole, and at the expense of the constitutional structure of the Federal Government.

For 35 years thereafter, Senator Mansfield's words were given heed, and the Fortas case remained a lonely historical aberration. But in the last Congress—my first as leader—the minority shattered Senate traditions and filibusters blocked 10 nominees.

It began with the nomination of Miguel Estrada to serve on the Court of Appeals for the District of Columbia. Mr. Estrada epitomized the American dream. An immigrant from Honduras, he arrived in America speaking no English, but he graduated from Harvard Law School, and argued numerous cases before the Supreme Court while serving as a Deputy Solicitor General. The American Bar Association gave him its highest recommendation and his confirmation by the Senate seemed assured.

But the confirmation vote never came. Each time we sought a consent agreement to limit debate, the minority leadership objected. In open session, they remarked that no amount of debate time would be sufficient and that they would not permit the Senate to vote.

After 13 days, I filed a cloture motion to close debate. Every Republican voted for it along with a handful of Democrats, but the minority held firm and we fell short with 55 votes. This process was repeated on the Estrada nomination six more times. But the discipline imposed by the minority leadership never weakened and we never budged a single vote.

Debate was not the issue. Obstruction was the issue. Finally, to the shame of the Senate and the harm of the American people, Mr. Estrada asked President Bush to withdraw his nomination.

Before the last Congress, the record number of cloture votes on a judicial nomination was two and no nomination with clear majority support ever died by filibuster. The Estrada case rewrote that tradition, and for the worse. On Miguel Estrada, seven cloture votes were taken, to no avail. He was a nominee who plainly could have been confirmed, but he was denied an up or down vote.

And the Estrada case was just the beginning. After Miguel Estrada, nine additional nominees were filibustered and the minority threatened filibusters on six more.

As the filibusters began to mushroom, Democratic Senator Zell Miller and I introduced a cloture reform resolution. Our proposal would have permitted an end to filibusters of nominations after reasonable and substantial debate. The Senate Rules Committee held a hearing on our resolution and reported it with an affirmative recommendation.

But the proposal languished on the Senate calendar, facing a certain filibuster from Senators opposed to cloture reform. Quite simply, those who undertook to filibuster these nominees wanted no impediments put in their way.

Consent orders had failed to resolve this issue, as had cloture and a rules change through the regular order. So we looked to the 2004 elections. And we made judicial filibusters an election issue in many States.

Notwithstanding election outcomes strengthening the margin of the majority, the minority dug in, saying that they had not filibustered too many nominees but too few. So even election outcomes failed.

When the present Congress convened last January, I was urged to move immediately for a change in Senate procedure so that these unprecedented filibusters could not be repeated. But I decided on a more measured and less confrontational course. Rather than move immediately to change procedure, I promoted dialogue at the leadership and committee level to seek a solution to this problem. Rather than act on the record of the last Congress, I hoped that the passage of a clearly won election and presence of new Democratic leadership would result in a sense of fairness being restored.

Sadly, these hopes were not fulfilled. More filibusters were promised, not only against seven nominees President Bush resubmitted but also against other nominees as then yet to be proposed. A renewal of filibusters against persons denied an up or down vote in the last Congress was a grave problem and would be reason enough for reform. Threatening filibusters against new nominees compounded the wrong and was further reason for reform. My choice was stark: accept a new tradition of judicial filibusters or act to address them.

For many decades, two great Senate traditions existed side by side. These were a general respect for the filibuster and a consensus that nominations brought to the floor would receive an up or down vote. Filibusters have been periodically conducted on legislation, sometimes successfully and sometimes ended by cloture. However, filibusters have not impeded the Senate's advice and consent role on nominations. In the exceedingly rare cases they were attempted, cloture was always invoked

with bipartisan support and the filibusters ceased.

But in the last Congress, judicial filibusters became instruments of partisan politics. Organized and promoted by the minority leadership, these filibusters proved resilient to cloture.

Due to these filibusters, the two great Senate traditions that used to coexist came to collide. If matters were left in this posture, either the power to advise and consent would yield to the filibuster or the filibuster would yield to the power to advise and consent.

Until these judicial filibusters were launched, the Senate lived by the principle that filibusters would not impede the exercise of constitutional confirmation powers and that a majority of Senators could vote to confirm or reject a nominee brought to the floor. The unparalleled filibusters undermined that tradition, denying nominees the courtesy of an up or down vote. They represented an effort by a Senate minority to obstruct the duty of the full Senate to advise and consent. The current minority claimed it had no choice but to filibuster, because Republicans controlled the White House and Senate. But the minority's conclusion defied history.

For 70 of the 100 years of the last century, the same party controlled the Presidency and the Senate, but the minority party leadership exercised restraint and refused to filibuster judicial nominees. The past half-century amply illustrates this point. During the Kennedy and Johnson administrations, Democrats controlled the Senate, but the Republican minority leader Everett Dirksen did not filibuster judicial nominees. While President Carter was in office, Democrats controlled the Senate, but Republican leader Howard Baker did not filibuster judicial nominees. For President Reagan's first 6 years, Republicans controlled the Senate, but Democratic Leader ROBERT BYRD did not filibuster judicial nominees. In President Clinton's first 2 years, Democrats had the Senate but Republican leader Bob Dole did not filibuster judicial nominees. During all those years, all those Congresses, and all those Presidencies, nominees brought to the floor got an up or down vote.

Democrats argued that by curbing judicial filibusters, the Senate would turn into a rubberstamp. But for more than two centuries, those filibusters did not exist. Shall we conclude that for 200 years the Senate was a rubberstamp and only now awakened to its responsibilities? What of those minority leaders who did not filibuster? Were they also rubberstamps? Was Dirksen? Was Baker, Was BYRD? Was Dole? Could the minority be right that only through the filibuster may the Senate's advice and consent check be vindicated? This was a novel conclusion and it stained the reputation of the great Senators that preceded us.

To make their case against curbs on judicial filibusters, the minority cited the 1968 nomination of Abe Fortas to be Chief Justice of the U.S. Supreme Court, and Franklin Roosevelt's court-packing plan of 1937. But use of these examples was an overreach and drew false comparisons.

In 1968, Abe Fortas was serving on the Supreme Court as an Associate Justice. Three years earlier, he had been confirmed by the Senate by voice vote, following a unanimous affirmative recommendation from the Judiciary Committee. Then Chief Justice Earl Warren announced his retirement, effective on the appointment of his successor. President Lyndon Johnson proposed to elevate Fortas to succeed Warren.

The non-controversial nominee of 1965 became the highly controversial nominee of 1968. Justice Fortas was caught in a political perfect storm. Some Senators raised questions of ethics. Others complained about cronyism. Yet others were concerned about Warren Court decisions. And still others thought that with the election looming weeks away, a new President should fill the Warren vacancy. But this political perfect storm was thoroughly bipartisan in nature, and reflected concerns from certain Republicans as well as numerous southern and northern Democrats.

Senator Mike Mansfield brought the Fortas nomination to the Senate floor late on September 24, 1968. After only 2 full days of debate, Mansfield filed a cloture motion. Almost a third of the 26 Senators who signed the cloture motion were Republicans, including the Republican whip. The vote on cloture was 45 yeas and 43 nays, well short of the two-thirds then needed to close debate. Nearly a third of Republicans supported cloture, including the Republican whip. Nearly a third of Democrats opposed it, including the Democratic whip. Of the 43 negative votes on cloture, 24 were Republican and 19 were Democratic.

Opponents of cloture claimed that debate had been too short in order to develop the full case against the Fortas nomination. In contrast to the Miguel Estrada filibuster, no one claimed that debate would go on endlessly and that no amount of time would be sufficient. Indeed, those who opposed cloture denied there was a filibuster at all.

So, the Fortas case was not analogous to the judicial filibusters we now confront. Support for and opposition to Fortas was broadly bipartisan, a fact that stands in stark contrast to the partisan filibusters that began in the last Congress as an instrument of party policy. At most, it was opposition to one man, and was not an effort to leverage judicial appointments through the threat of a filibuster-veto. The Fortas opposition came together in one aberrational moment. Nothing like it had happened in the previous 180 years and nothing like it was repeated for the next 35 years. Absolutely, it did not represent a sustained effort by a party minority to shatter Senate confirmation traditions and exercise a filibuster-veto destructive of checks and balances. No comparison can be made between that single aberrational moment and the pattern of judicial filibusters we confronted.

The minority also contended that if Republicans moved against the judicial filibusters, we would follow in the footsteps of Franklin Roosevelt's attempt to pack the Supreme Court. But this was a comparison without basis.

Frustrated by the Supreme Court's ruling unconstitutional several New Deal measures, President Roosevelt sought legislation to pack the court by appointing a new Justice for every sitting Justice over the age of 70. In a fireside chat, he compared the three branches of Government to a three horse team pulling a plow. Unless all three horses pulled in the same direction, the plow could not move. To synchronize all the horses, Roosevelt proposed to pack the court.

Roosevelt's effort was a direct assault on the independence of the judiciary and plainly undermined the principles of separation of powers and checks and balances. He failed in a Senate with 76 members of his own party.

No good analogy can be drawn between what Roosevelt attempted and our effort to end judicial filibusters. Unlike Roosevelt, Republicans were not trying to undermine the separation of powers. And unlike Roosevelt, Republicans were not trying to destabilize checks and balances, but to restore them.

That the judicial filibusters undermined a longstanding Senate tradition is evident. But traditions are not laudable merely because they are old. This tradition is important because it underpins a vital constitutional principle that the President shall nominate, subject to the advice and consent of the Senate. When filibusters are used to block a vote, the advice and consent of the Senate is not possible.

A cloture vote to end a filibuster is not advice and consent within the Constitution's meaning. Notwithstanding the minority's claim, nominees denied a confirmation vote due to filibuster were ''rejected.'' Instead, what was rejected was the constitutional right of all Senators to vote up or down on the nominees.

To require a cloture threshold of 60 votes for confirmation disturbs checks and balances between the executive and the Senate and creates a strong potential for tyranny by the minority. A minority may hold hostage the nomination process, threatening to undermine judicial independence by filibustering any appointment that does not meet particular ideological or litmus tests.

The Constitution provides that a duly elected executive shall nominate, subject to advice and consent by a majority of the Senate. Implicit in that structure is that the President and the Senate shall be politically accountable

to the American people, and that accountability will be a sufficient check on the decisions made by each of them. That was the system by which we Americans addressed nominations for more than two centuries, until the last Congress. But judicial filibusters would replace that system with one that gave the minority a filibuster-veto in the confirmation process.

Trying to legitimize their judicial filibusters, the minority took to the floor to extol the virtue of filibusters generally. And as to legislative filibusters, I agree with them. But judicial filibusters are not cut from the same cloth as legislative filibusters and must not receive similar treatment. So, I concur with the sentiments Senator Mansfield expressed during the Fortas debate:

In the past, the Senate has discussed, debated and sometimes agonized, but it has always voted on the merits. No Senator or group of Senators has ever usurped that constitutional prerogative. That unbroken tradition, in my opinion, merely reflects on the part of the Senate the distinction heretofore recognized between its constitutional responsibility to confirm or reject a nominee and its role in the enactment of new and far-reaching legislative proposals.

History demonstrates that filibusters have almost exclusively been applied against the Senate's own constitutional prerogative to initiate legislation, and not against nominations. Judicial filibusters put fundamental constitutional values in jeopardy, hallowed principles of checks and balances, the separation of powers and an independent judiciary.

Having exhausted all other alternatives and unwilling to acquiesce in the judicial filibusters, we in the Republican leadership looked for a solution. We recognized that article I, section 5 of the Constitution states that ''each House may determine the Rules of its proceedings''. In short, that means the Constitution gives the Senate the power to govern itself. And we proposed to draw on that power to change how the Senate ends debate on judges. We called this the constitutional option, and we built support for it.

The Senate is an evolving institution. Its rules and processes are not a straitjacket. Over time, adjustments have occurred in Senate procedure to reflect changes in Senate behavior. Tactics no longer limited by self-restraint became restricted by new rules and precedents.

In response to the tradition-shattering filibusters, we sought to create a precedent. And that precedent would guarantee that after substantial debate, each judicial nominee brought to the floor got an up or down vote.

As I said, proceeding with the constitutional option was painful to many Senators, including myself, because minority rights are deeply respected. But even longstanding rights can take new forms and become abused. And that is what happened when judicial filibusters damaged Senate traditions. We could not permit the precedent of these filibusters to take root. To restore Senate traditions, the constitutional option became a necessary last resort.

As we moved toward a vote on the constitutional option, a compromise was reached, and important Senate traditions were restored. Filibusters were confined to ''extraordinary circumstances''—an exercise of self-restraint. So some Democrats who had routinely supported the judicial filibusters began voting for cloture.

Of this I am confident: but for the constitutional option, great nominees never would have been confirmed. But for the constitutional option, judicial filibusters would have become ever more routine. And but for the constitutional option, deal brokers would have had no deal to broker.

Because we acted, the sword of the filibuster was sheathed. Highly qualified nominees who would have been blocked now sit on courts of appeals. And Samuel Alito, who was the subject of a failed filibuster, now serves on the U.S. Supreme Court.

The problem of judicial filibusters was of monumental importance. It affected the internal functioning of the Senate, the relationship between the Senate and the Presidency, and the relationship between the Senate and the courts. It was the biggest challenge I confronted as majority leader and the issue of largest consequence for our constitutional system.

RECOGNITION OF THE MINORITY LEADER

The ACTING PRESIDENT pro tempore. The minority leader is recognized.

HONORING MARY ARNOLD

Mr. REID. Mr. President, in life we all have changes. They are so difficult to accept. In the last month or so, I have had a lot of changes in my life. One of the changes that has been so troubling for me is that we have lost a friend in the Senate. Ralph Waldo Emerson said:

Sorrow makes us all children again. [It] destroys all differences of intellect. The wisest know nothing.

The family member we have lost is Mary Arnold. She was such a wonderful, pleasant, thoughtful, kind person. Anyone would recognize her even though they wouldn't know her by name, simply because of her description—beautiful white hair, elegantly dressed every day, a wonderful smile. She never drew attention to herself, but she was so good for the institution. She sat right back here every day we were in session.

She was the best when things weren't going so well. She was here for more than two decades. She was the best when things were real tumultuous here on the floor. If somebody wanted an easel for a chart, that was available. She directed the pages as to what they were supposed to do and not do. She always did it with such a pleasantness.

I first met Mary Arnold when her daughter worked here. She was a Republican floor person. She, like her mom, had this great, disarming smile. I was not in the city when the funeral took place and was unable to attend, but I saw in the program a picture of the deceased Mary Arnold. She looked exactly like her daughter. Exactly. She could have passed for her daughter.

She came to Washington over 40 years ago. Born in the late 1930s in Jonesboro, Arkansas, she attended Memphis State University. She worked as a flight attendant—a stewardess, as they used to be called. All the stewards and stewardesses are very attractive people, but in the old days that was a requirement. Stewardesses had to look real good; Mary Arnold looked real good. I am sure she was a great flight attendant, a stewardess.

She worked for a number of Members of Congress, including Congressman Harvey of Indiana and Representative Zion. She worked for the Sergeant at Arms, of course.

She was a wonderful person. I had conversations with her. She loved animals, especially the ugly little dogs people fall in love with, Boston terriers. She was in love with her Boston terriers. She was a wonderful person. Coming to the Senate today and not having Mary back there is a tremendous loss to me and to the Senate. I want her wonderful daughter Mary Elizabeth to know she will be missed. Her spirit is something all in the Senate should have a little bit of. My thoughts are with Mary wherever she might be and my love and respect for her family is paramount as a result of the wonderful person she was.

Mr. FRIST. Mr. President, as the Democratic leader has so eloquently described, it is hard to imagine the smiles and the charm of Mary Miller Arnold will no longer grace the Senate.

I have had the opportunity to talk to her daughter Mary Elizabeth several times since her mom's demise. The love and the respect, that bond a mother and a daughter together share, is magnificent; it sparkles so much in her voice today.

Mary was a fellow Tennessean. She will be remembered most for her uncanny ability to very efficiently enforce the Senate rules at this door, without sacrificing at any point in time her unfailing, consistent professionalism, her dedication, her polite demeanor.

The Senate simply could not function, we all know, without our staff and committed staff. We 100 Senators are, for the most part, the face of the Senate, but it is people such as Mary who are here, day after day, the cogs in the wheels behind it, who keep this Senate moving along, keep it ticking.

She was the pulse of the Senate, in many ways. To Mary's friends and to